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基于原型理论与非范畴化理论的多义词研究

A Study of Polysemy - Based on Prototype Theory and  
Decategorization Theory

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## Abstract

The importance of polysemy, for a long time, if not ignored, was not taken seriously as it is by traditional linguistics, although it is a very common semantic phenomenon. Since 1980's, with the development of cognitive linguistics, especially cognitive semantics, it has been a focus for semantic study. Eleanor Rosch's prototype theory provides theoretical support for the study of polysemy, and since then there have been many studies of polysemy in prototype theory. Although prototype theory owns great power in explaining semantic relation of meanings in polysemy, there are some issues that prototype theory can not satisfactorily deal with, for example, the dynamicity of the semantic change in polysemy, especially, functional polysemy, and antonymous phenomenon as pointed out in this thesis. Thus a complementary theory, decategorization theory is put forward in this thesis to handle these issues related to polysemy. Compared with prototype theory, although decategorization is relatively less analyzed, it provides a new angle for the study of polysemy.

The linguistic phenomenon of polysemy is a kind of semantic extension, and metaphor and metonymy are two main motivations under it. Thus there are metaphorical polysemies and metonymical polysemies. The former are formed by the mapping between source domain and target domain, but the two domains belong to different domains, while the latter are formed by the mapping between the source domain and target domain, and the two domains belong to the same domain. Besides, there are still some polysemous words which are formed by the combinational effect of metaphor and metonymy. Whether analyzing polysemy in prototype theory or decategorization theory, metaphor and metonymy are the mechanisms. It is stressed in this thesis that decategorization theory is not contrary to categorization theory (or, prototype theory), but a complement of it. Prototype theory can perfectly, from a synchronic level, interpret relation of the senses in semantic categories of polysemous

words, while decategorization theory can explain, from a diachronic level, the process of the senses transforming into a different semantic category (in this thesis, mainly refer to the transformation of grammar classes, i.e. functional polysemy), which reflects the dynamicity of semantic category. According to prototype theory, polysemy is a semantic category with a prototypical sense. In fact, there are some polysemies whose prototypes are hard to identify, and antonym is a case in point. Decategorization theory can provide the theoretic motivation to explain antonym, by focusing on the process of the transformation of semantics, which effectively avoids the issue of identifying the prototypical sense in semantic category.

This thesis can be regarded almost as a contrastive analysis between prototype theory and decategorization theory in studying polysemy. But to some extent, it is more reasonable to say that the two theories are in a complementary relationship, especially in explaining polysemous phenomenon. If decategorization theory is included into the theoretic framework of prototype theory, they can form a unified pattern of interpretation. In this way, not only the pattern can be used for the explanation of the relations of different functions and relations of different senses, but also can be applied in presenting dynamically mechanisms and processes of different functions and semantics.

**Key words:** prototype theory      decategorization theory      polysemous word



## 摘要

尽管一词多义是非常普遍的语义现象，但长期以来在传统语言学的研究中，其重要性并没有得到应有的重视。20 世纪 80 年代以来，随着认知语言学，尤其是认知语义学的兴起，一词多义成为了语言研究的焦点之一。Rosch 的原型理论为一词多义的研究提供了有利的理论基础，因此不少一词多义的研究都是运用原型理论展开的。尽管原型理论在阐释一词多义中多个意义之间的关系具有强大的解释力，但是也有些问题原型理论还未能完全合理解释。比如说原型理论解释多义词时，无法有效地体现其语义变化的动态性，尤其是功能多义词。再比如原型理论无法处理一类特殊多义词：同形异义词。为了补充原型理论在解释上述问题上的不足，本文提出一种相对较新的理论，即非范畴化理论。非范畴化理论为多义词的研究提供了新的理论视角。

一词多义是一种语义延伸现象，隐喻和转喻是语义延伸的主要机制，因此有由源域映射到目标域，但两者不属于同一领域而形成的隐喻性多义词，源域映射到目标域，且两者属于同一领域而形成的而形成的转喻性多义词，除此之外还有一部分多义词的形成是隐喻和转喻的共同作用。在对多义词的分析中，无论是原型理论还是非范畴化理论，隐喻和转喻都是其工作机制。文中强调非范畴化理论并不是对范畴化理论（或者说原型理论）的否定，而是对其的补充。原型范畴理论可以从共时层面很好地阐释多义词中多个意义之间的关系，而非范畴化理论则是从历史层面展示语义转换到新语义范畴的过程（本文中的语义转换主要指语言实体在语法层面上的转变，也是功能多义词），因此非范畴化理论可以很好地体现语义范畴的动态性。根据原型理论，多义词是具有原型语义的语义范畴，但事实上，很多多义词的原型语义很难确定，比如说同词异义。而非范畴化理论为类似同词异义的多义词提供理论理据，因为非范畴化注重的是语义转换的过程，这样就可以有效规避要确定原型语义的问题了。

本文是原型理论和非范畴化理论在关于多义词的对比研究，但从某种意义上而言，这两种理论是为互补关系。将非范畴化理论置于原型理论的框架下，使其形成一个统一的解释机制，用以研究语言现象，尤其在研究多义词现象，不但可

以阐释各个不同功能或者不同意义之间的关系,而且还能够动态地体现意义与功能产生的机制与过程。

**关 键 词:** 原型理论      非范畴化理论      一词多义

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## Content

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>Content.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>Chapter One Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Rationale of the Research .....	1
1.2 Research Method .....	2
1.3 Main Structure of the Thesis .....	3
<b>Chapter Two Literature Review .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Definition of Polysemy.....	5
2.2 Previous Researches on Polysemy .....	5
2.2.1 Classical Approach to Polysemy .....	6
2.2.2 Structuralist Approach to Polysemy .....	8
2.2.3 Cognitive Approach to Polysemy .....	9
2.3 Comments on Previous Researches upon Polysemy .....	11
<b>Chapter Three Some Concepts Related to Polysemy .....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Polysemy and Homonymy.....	13
3.2 Polysemy and Vagueness .....	14
3.3 Polysemy: Semantic Polysemy and Functional Polysemy .....	15
3.4 Definition of Functional Polysemy .....	16
3.5 Patterns of Functional Polysemy .....	16
3.5.1 Functional Polysemy on Lexical Level .....	16
3.5.2 Functional Polysemy on Syntactic Level .....	17
3.6 Antonym .....	18
3.7. Summary .....	18
<b>Chapter Four Mechanisms in the Formation of Polysemy .....</b>	<b>20</b>

<b>4.1 Metaphor .....</b>	<b>20</b>
4.1.1 Nature of Metaphor .....	21
4.1.2 Structure of Metaphor.....	22
<b>4.2 Metonymy .....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.2.1 Nature of Metonymy .....	25
4.2.2 Structure of Metonymy.....	26
<b>4.3 Metaphor and Metonymy in Formation of the Multi-senses of Polysemy</b>	<b>27</b>
4.3.1 Metaphor in Formation of the Multi-senses of Polysemy .....	27
4.3.2 Metonymy in Formation of the Multi-senses of Polysemy .....	29
4.3.3 Metaphor and Metonymy in Formation of the Multi-senses of Polysemy .....	30
<b>4.4 Summary .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Chapter Five Study of Polysemy in Prototype Theory and Decategorization Theory .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>5.1 Theories of Category .....</b>	<b>33</b>
5.1.1 Classical Category Theory .....	33
5.1.2 Prototype Theory .....	34
5.1.2.1 Studies on Anthropology and Cognitive Psychology .....	35
5.1.3 Decategorization Theory .....	38
<b>5.2 Relationship between Categorization and Decategorization .....</b>	<b>41</b>
5.2.1 Dynamicity of Category .....	41
5.2.2 Relationship between Categorization and Decategorization.....	42
<b>5.3 Study of Polysemy in Prototype Theory .....</b>	<b>43</b>
5.3.1 Study of Polysemy in Prototype Theory .....	44
5.3.2 Problems of Prototype Theory in the Study of Polysemy .....	47
5.3.2.1 Unable to Identify Prototypes in Some Semantic Categories of Polysemy .....	47
5.3.2.2 Failure to Deal with Antonym .....	48
<b>5.4 Study of Polysemy in Decategorization Theory .....</b>	<b>49</b>

5.4.1 Continuity of Decategorization .....	49
5.4.2 Mechanism of Decategorization: Combined Effects of Metaphor and Metonymy .....	50
5.4.3 Advantages of Studying Polysemy in Decategorization Theory .....	52
5.4.3.1 Functional Polysemy and Decategorization .....	52
5.4.3.2 Embodiment of Dynamicity of Polysemy .....	53
5.4.3.3 Study of Antonym in Decategorization Theory.....	54
<b>5.5 Summary .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Chapter Six Conclusion.....</b>	<b>58</b>
6.1 Conclusion of the Research.....	58
6.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study.....	60
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>67</b>

# 目 录

摘 要	I
目 录	V
第一章 引言	1
1.1 论文构思	1
1.2 研究方法	2
1.3 论文结构	3
第二章 文献综述	5
2.1 多义词定义	5
2.2 传统理论对多义词的研究	5
2.2.1 经典理论对多义词的研究	6
2.2.2 结构主义对多义词的研究	8
2.2.3 认知主义对多义词的研究	9
2.3 对三大理论下多义词研究的评价	11
第三章 与多义词相关概念	13
3.1 多义词与同形异义	13
3.2 多义词与语义模糊	14
3.3 多义词：语义多义词与功能多义词	15
3.4 功能多义性的定义	16
3.5 功能多义性的形式	16
3.5.1 词汇层面的功能多义词	16
3.5.2 结构层面的功能多义性	17
3.6 同形反义词	18
3.7 结论	18
第四章 多义性的形成机制	20

<b>4.1 隐喻</b> .....	<b>20</b>
4.1.1 隐喻的本质 .....	21
4.1.2 隐喻的内在结构 .....	22
<b>4.2 转喻</b> .....	<b>24</b>
4.2.1 转喻的本质 .....	25
4.2.2 转喻的内在结构 .....	26
<b>4.3 隐喻和转喻作用形成的多义词</b> .....	<b>27</b>
4.3.1 隐喻作用形成的多义词 .....	27
4.3.2 转喻作用形成的多义词 .....	29
4.3.3 隐喻和转喻联合作用形成的多义词 .....	30
<b>4.4 结论</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>第五章 原型理论与非范畴化理论下的多义词研究</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>5.1 范畴理论</b> .....	<b>33</b>
5.1.1 经典范畴理论 .....	33
5.1.2 原型理论 .....	34
5.1.2.1 人类学及认知心理学的研究 .....	35
5.1.3 非范畴化理论 .....	38
<b>5.2 范畴化与非范畴化之间的关系</b> .....	<b>41</b>
5.2.1 范畴的动态性 .....	41
5.2.2 范畴化与非范畴化之间的关系 .....	42
<b>5.3 原型理论下的多义词研究</b> .....	<b>43</b>
5.3.1 原型理论下的多义词研究 .....	44
5.3.2 原型理论在多义词研究中的问题 .....	47
5.3.2.1 无法确定某些多义词语义范畴的原型语义 .....	47
5.3.2.2 未能解释同词异义现象 .....	48
<b>5.4 非范畴化理论下多义词的研究</b> .....	<b>49</b>
5.4.1 非范畴化的连续性 .....	49
5.4.2 非范畴化的工作机制：隐喻和转喻的联合作用 .....	50
5.4.3 非范畴化理论下研究一词多义的优势 .....	52

5.4.3.1 功能多义词与非范畴化 .....	52
5.4.3.2 体现多义词的动态性 .....	53
5.4.3.3 同词异义与非范畴化 .....	54
5.5 结论 .....	56
<b>第六章 结论 .....</b>	<b>58</b>
6.1 研究总结 .....	58
6.2 研究局限与展望 .....	60
致谢 .....	61
参考文献 .....	67



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